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A197

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RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

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ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-17	CIAE-00	C-01	DODE-00	HA-09	H-01
	INRE-00	INR-01	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OMB-01
	PA-01	PM-02	PRS-01	P-01	SNP-00	SP-00	SS-00
	TRSE-00	T-01	USIE-00	/040W			

-----81BC38 032132Z /38

O 032131Z DEC 92
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5943
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 12709

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, VE
SUBJECT: [REDACTED] COMMENTS ON ASPECTS OF CURRENT
SITUATION

B1

REF: CARACAS 12685

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. SUMMARY. [REDACTED] CLAIMED TO US
DECEMBER 2 THAT GOVERNMENT EMERGED STRENGTHENED FROM
FAILED COUP AND THAT ANOTHER COUP ATTEMPT IN NEAR FUTURE
IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY. POSSIBILITY OF TERRORIST-STYLE
ATTACKS IS REAL, HE SAID, INCLUDING AGAINST THE
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PRESIDENT. AMBASSADOR URGED HIM TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT
"TRIUMPHALISM" AND ASSERTED NEED TO MOVE FORWARD RAPIDLY
ON POLITICAL REFORM AGENDA, ESPECIALLY UNINOMINAL VOTING.
[REDACTED] THAT WAS IMPORTANT. END SUMMARY.

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3. IN COURSE OF DECEMBER 2 CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR
AND DCM PRIMARILY ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS-RELATED ASPECTS OF
CURRENT SITUATION (REFTEL), [REDACTED]
PROVIDED A NUMBER OF OTHER OBSERVATIONS. MOST IMPORTANT
OF THESE WERE:

B1

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(B), 1.4(D)
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 2 DEC 2017
DATE/CASE ID: 17 AUG 2006 200503206

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-- THERE IS VERY LITTLE CHANCE OF ANOTHER CONCERTED COUP ATTEMPT FOR SOME TIME. COUP PLOTTERS HAVE BEEN "DISARTICULATED". THE ARMY REMAINED LOYAL ON NOVEMBER 27 IN GOOD PART DUE TO THE WORK WHICH HAD BEEN DONE SINCE FEBRUARY IN SPLITTING UP COUP SYMPATHIZERS AND SEPARATING THEM FROM TROOP COMMAND. THE POSITION OF THE ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN STRENGTHENED AS A RESULT OF THE FAILED COUP.

-- THE POSSIBILITY OF TERRORIST ACTION, HOWEVER, CANNOT BE DISCARDED. THERE REMAIN ON THE LOOSE A NUMBER OF ARMED PARTICIPANTS IN "EXTREMIST" GROUPS.

-- A SECOND REBEL CASSETTE WAS DISCOVERED AT CHANNEL 8 WHEN IT WAS RETAKEN BY LOYALIST FORCES. THE CASSETTE CONTAINED A PRONOUNCEMENT BY ADMIRAL GRUBER, FLANKED BY (AF) GENERAL VISCONTI AND ADMIRAL CABRERA. THE ARMY WAS REPRESENTED BY ONLY A LT. COLONEL. THE NATIONAL GUARD REPRESENTATIVE WAS OF EVEN LOWER RANK. THIS DEMONSTRATED THAT THE PLOTTERS HAD BEEN UNABLE TO ATTRACT SUPPORT FROM

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ANY HIGH LEVEL OFFICIAL OF EITHER THE ARMY OR THE NATIONAL GUARD. THE TAPE WAS EVIDENTLY TO HAVE BEEN BROADCAST AFTER COUP SUCCEEDED.

-- A KEY FACTOR IN DEFEAT OF THE COUP ATTEMPT WAS THAT PEOPLE DID NOT COME INTO STREETS AS REBELS HAD PLANNED AND EXPECTED. WAITING FOR POPULAR SUPPORT TO MATERIALIZE HAD COST THE PLOTTERS VALUABLE TIME. ANOTHER KEY FACTOR WAS REFUSAL BY F-16 PILOTS TO JOIN THE REBELLION.

-- THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO FLED TO PERU BUT NOW CHOOSE TO RETURN WILL BE SUBJECT TO TRIAL LIKE OTHER DETAINEES.

-- (IN RESPONSE TO AMBASSADOR'S QUESTION) CAP HAS BEEN WARNED, BUT HE DOES NOT TAKE THE THREAT TO HIS PERSONAL SECURITY SERIOUSLY. HE THEREFORE GOES WHERE HE SHOULD NOT AND EXPOSES HIMSELF UNWISELY. AN ATTEMPT ON HIS LIFE IS A POSSIBILITY EVEN THOUGH CAP DOES NOT BELIEVE IT.

4. AMBASSADOR TOLD [REDACTED] THERE IS A REAL DANGER THAT THE POLITICAL CLASS WILL ADOPT THE POSITION THAT NOTHING MORE CAN HAPPEN HERE AND WILL USE IT AS AN EXCUSE FOR INACTION. THE CRISIS HAS NOT FINALLY BEEN RESOLVED, HE CAUTIONED. POLITICAL REFORM REMAINS ESSENTIAL AND

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URGENT. PERHAPS THE MOST IMPORTANT OF THESE REFORMS IN
TERMS OF ITS SYMBOLIC IMPORTANCE TO THE PEOPLE IS FULL
UNINOMINAL VOTING. BOTH MAJOR PARTIES SHOULD GET BEHIND
THIS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AND PASS THE NECESSARY LAW.

[REDACTED] THAT THIS WOULD BE IMPORTANT, BUT REPEATED
THE REFRAIN THAT THE POLITICIANS HAVE DUG IN THEIR HEELS
ON THIS ISSUE UNTIL NOW. HE (WITH CAP'S FULL SUPPORT)

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INTENDED TO PRESS AHEAD ON THIS AND OTHER REFORMS,
INCLUDING JUDICIAL REFORM, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. [REDACTED]
ALSO SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD FACE DOWN THE
POLITICIANS ON ECONOMIC REFORM ISSUES. THERE WOULD BE NO
BACKTRACKING ON THE PROGRAM. HE NOTED THAT POLITICIANS IN
BOTH PARTIES WERE BEING HIGHLY CRITICAL OF IT. THE
AMBASSADOR POINTED OUT, HOWEVER, THAT SOME OF THE RHETORIC
WAS RELATED TO THE DECEMBER 6 ELECTIONS, AND MIGHT WELL
LET UP AFTER THAT DATE.

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[REDACTED]
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